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Letter dated 11 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 8 October 2018, addressed to you by the Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, İsmet Korukoğlu (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 45, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 11 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 3 October 2018, addressed to you by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Kudret Özersay (see enclosure).

(*Signed*) İsmet **Korukoğlu**
Representative

Enclosure

I have the honour to bring to your kind attention the recent attempts by the Greek Cypriot administration of Southern Cyprus to perpetuate the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot people in all fields of life, which is poisoning the atmosphere between the two peoples on the island, particularly at a time when you and the Security Council are calling upon both sides to proceed with confidence-building measures.

In this regard, the Greek Cypriot side has been aggressively pursuing a policy of defamation and misinformation regarding the Turkish Cypriot side. As a recent example, a series of letters have been sent to the maritime authorities of various countries in order to prevent any maritime interaction/trade between those countries and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot side has gone so far as to unilaterally deem our sea ports "illegal" and has been encouraging the said countries to issue penalties against their own shipping companies for cooperating in any way with or travelling to ports in North Cyprus. As is known, the ports in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus have not been deemed illegal according to international law by any country or international organization, including the European Union.

In this connection, I would like to refer to a statement dated 17 October 2017 by the then European Union Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, which reads:

> The Commission is aware that in 1974, the "government of the Republic of Cyprus" declared the sea ports in the northern part of Cyprus (Famagusta, Kyrenia, Karavostassi) prohibited and closed for all vessels. This was a unilateral decision of the Republic of Cyprus, with consequences under domestic Cypriot law but with no apparent consequences under international law. In other words, it is the Commission's understanding that there is no prohibition under general international law to enter and leave sea ports in the northern part of Cyprus. Furthermore, neither the United Nations Security Council nor the European Community has ever imposed a trade embargo with respect to those areas.

As another concrete example, the Greek Cypriot side has been targeting universities that have established academic ties with universities in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in an effort to discourage any academic cooperation. The most recent example is the letter from the Greek Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture addressed to University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, imploring the university to reconsider the recent academic exchange agreement it had reached with the Eastern Mediterranean University in Northern Cyprus. As regards bilateral agreements with universities, it is a well-known fact that many of our universities have cooperation agreements, exchange programmes and other arrangements with esteemed international universities in the United States, Europe and even the Far East. Graduates from our universities move on to higher education, as well as employment, in all parts of the world.

Most recently, the Greek Cypriot Administration has expressed sheer outrage over the intended participation of members of the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra, as well as its artistic director and first violinist from Germany, in the music festival being organized in different venues in Northern Cyprus, including Bellapais Monastery, Girne Amphitheatre and Salamis Amphitheatre, between 21 September and 16 November 2018. Several Greek Cypriot members of Parliament have gone so far as to ask that the Greek Cypriot Ministry of Foreign Affairs take measures to "set the musicians straight", despite the fact that they would be participating in their personal capacity alongside their fellow Turkish Cypriot musicians. The matter has been heavily debated in the Greek Cypriot Parliament, and the musicians have even been

publicly named and shamed in the Greek Cypriot press. Numerous members of Parliament have called for their dismissal from the orchestra, and they must now face the orchestra board to provide an explanation for their intended participation. As a result, the said musicians had to withdraw from the festival, and thus several concerts had to be cancelled. This is a clear demonstration of intolerance towards the Turkish Cypriots, even in the fields of culture and art, and constitutes an utterly anachronistic approach in this day and age.

Other examples of obstructionist initiatives of the Greek Cypriot side span from the field of health, to that of culture, to the freedom of travel of individuals to Northern Cyprus. The attached non-exhaustive list provides more examples of the said impediments imposed by the Greek Cypriot side, and provides an overview of the intolerance concerning any interaction of the Turkish Cypriot side with the rest of the world.

These initiatives clearly show that the Greek Cypriot side cannot even tolerate the easing of the lives of the Turkish Cypriots in the field of economy, just as they cannot tolerate our interactions in the political, cultural, sporting and academic fields. It is highly hypocritical and far from sincere to claim, on the one hand, to be committed to taking steps as regards the confidence-building measures while, on the other hand, attempting to isolate the Turkish Cypriot people, with a view to undermining them in all walks of life.

I avail myself of this opportunity to put on record the above-mentioned facts in the hope that you will call upon the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus to cease these negative steps, which destroy any confidence there may be between the two sides and their peoples. No doubt, abandoning such steps will be a confidence-building measure in itself.

Kudret **Özersay**
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Attachment

Recent obstructionist actions of the Greek Cypriot side

1. The Greek Cypriot side has sent letters to the maritime administrative authorities of various countries which included allegations regarding the sea ports in North Cyprus being "illegal" and closed to international navigation. The Greek Cypriot side also claims that ships that come to the ports of Northern Cyprus are breaching international law and urges the maritime authorities to issue circulars and fine the companies and ship owners that have come to those ports.

2. The Greek Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture has sent a letter to the University of Oxford in England regarding the university's cooperation with the Eastern Mediterranean University in Northern Cyprus on women's health research, which includes allegations regarding the status of the universities in Northern Cyprus.

3. The Cyprus Dental Association has sent a letter to the Executive Board of the European Regional Organization of the International Dental Federation regarding objections towards an event that was held in Northern Cyprus, Kyrenia, in March 2018, hosted by the Northern Cyprus Association of Dental Students, which is a member of the International Association of Dental Students. The letter included a number of groundless claims and allegations about Northern Cyprus and the Cyprus issue in general, alleging that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus unilaterally declared its independence and is an illegal State, while asserting Security Council resolutions as proof of such illegality, underlining a lack of accreditation of universities in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and of the Northern Cyprus Association of Dental Students by the Greek Cypriot side and questioning events being held by international organizations in areas that the Greek Cypriot side claims are "under occupation".

4. A professor from a university in Cairo, who was supposed to give a lecture in a university in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, was prevented from crossing to the North as he flew from Cairo to Larnaca. He was detained in a hotel in Larnaca without being given any reason.

5. A note verbale was distributed on 4 June 2018 by the Greek Cypriot Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the foreign missions in the South, urging them to refrain from visiting touristic or historical sites in the North, such as Othello Castle, and even other historic sites which have been restored by the bicommunal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage with funding from the European Union. This is unacceptable as it intends to restrict the freedom of movement of individuals by using them to further impose the Greek Cypriot political agenda, namely the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

6. The Greek Cypriot policy of preventing students and teachers from visiting schools in the North as envisaged in the IMAGINE project.

7. The attitude of halting the work of the Bicommunal Ad Hoc Committee on European Union Preparation, which was set up to prepare the Turkish Cypriots for European Union acquis.

8. The arson attack on the warehouses of a Greek Cypriot trader who bought potatoes from Turkish Cypriot producers.

9. The recurrent violent attacks by the supporters of the far-right ELAM political party against the Turkish Cypriots and their cars, where the perpetrators have never been brought to justice.

10. The banning of the purchase of gas and other household items from the North.

11. The removal of tiles from a school in Limassol after it was discovered that they were produced in the North (despite the fact that such practice is within the framework of the Green Line Regulation).

12. The criticism shown by the Greek Cypriot leadership of a project sponsored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe regarding a bicommunal glossary for journalists.

13. The Greek Cypriot Administration has expressed sheer outrage over the intended participation of members of the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra, as well as its artistic director and first violinist from Germany, in the music festival organized in Northern Cyprus between 21 September and 16 November 2018. The members of Parliament have gone so far as to ask that the Greek Cypriot Ministry of Foreign Affairs take measures to "set the musicians straight", despite the fact that they would be participating in their personal capacity alongside their fellow Turkish Cypriot musicians. The matter has been heavily debated in the Greek Cypriot Parliament, and the musicians have even been publicly named and shamed in the Greek Cypriot press. Numerous members of Parliament have called for their dismissal from the orchestra, and they must now face the orchestra board to provide an explanation for their intended participation. Within the scope of the festival, several concerts are scheduled to take place at different venues in Northern Cyprus, including Bellapais Monastery, Girne Amphitheatre and Salamis Amphitheatre.